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ABSTRACT

Prepared by the Texas Education Agency for use in integrating career education into existing school programs, this curriculum guide presents an overview and objectives of career education. Other sections of the guide discuss: (1) Implementing Career Education, (2) Career Education in the Elementary School, (3) Career Education in the Middle School, and (4) Career Education in the High School. Included in the appendixes is a listing of career fields and career education concepts. (JS)

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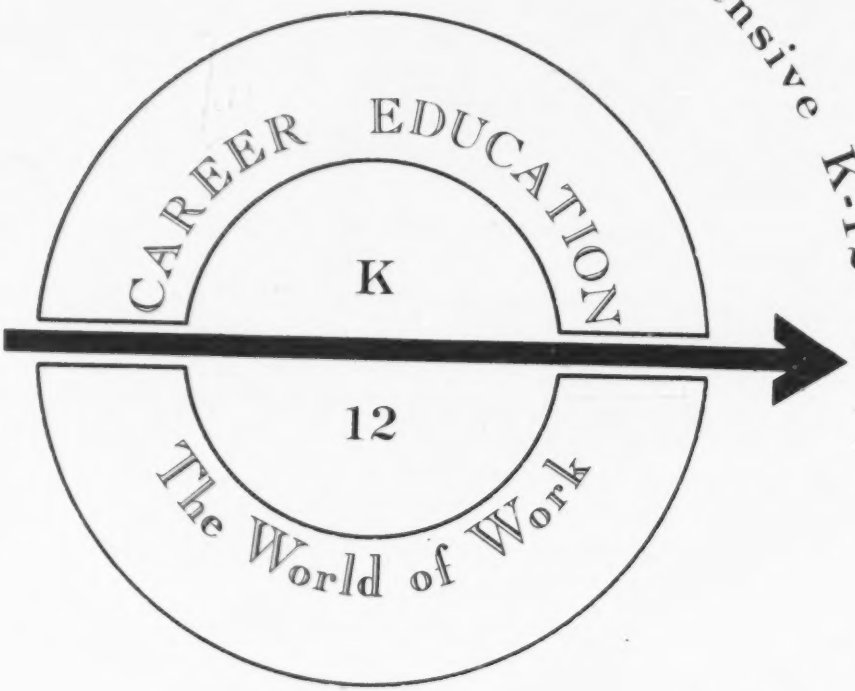
A Tentative Framework for Developing Comprehensive K-12 Career Education



Texas Education Agency
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April 1972

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FOREWORD

A major goal of public education in Texas is to develop economic and occupational competency in students. Meeting this goal means assisting young people to discover and prepare for satisfying, productive means of earning their living. Local school districts are, therefore, encouraged to develop and implement Career Education comprehensively from kindergarten through the twelfth grade for all pupils and in all programs.

This bulletin, the first in a series, gives Texas school administrators and their staffs a tentative framework for developing such a curriculum. It was prepared by the Texas Education Agency staff in cooperation with the statewide Advisory Committee on Career Education. Recommendations from local school districts will be used to revise this bulletin during the spring of 1973.

Other bulletins in this series will provide more detailed suggestions concerning Career Education in the elementary school, the middle school, and the high school.

J. W. Edgar
Commissioner of Education

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I. AN OVERVIEW OF CAREER EDUCATION

Personal commitment to a career field as a means to support oneself is a fundamental life decision. There is increasing evidence that an individual will change jobs and specific types of work several times during his lifetime. Because choice of a career field is so important in the life of an individual, it is especially important that each person be well equipped to make appropriate choices. Selecting a career should be based on a process or a series of decisions, not one irrevocable decision. Because the public schools have not been structured to facilitate the career decision making process, and other institutions are not structured to assist the young person in preparing himself for the adult working world, it is urgent that public elementary and secondary schools undertake this task. The difficulty of performing this role is compounded by the rapid development of technology and the increase of occupational specialization which render it increasingly difficult for the majority of students to have firsthand acquaintanceship with the wide variety of job possibilities. At the same time, the growth of man's interdependence intellectually, socially, economically, and vocationally has made Career Education essential.

Definitions of "Career" and "Career Education"

The term "career" is used here in a broad sense to include skilled, professional, semi-skilled, paraprofessional, and technical work--the entire complex of the world of work.

"Career Education" is coordinated instruction, integrated into the entire curriculum, K-12, and designed to assist students in

- understanding both the world of work and attitudes toward it;
- understanding the relationships which exist between education and career opportunity;
- understanding the economic and social structures of our society and how they influence the ways people support themselves;
- making informed decisions concerning how they will earn a living and taking responsibility for making those decisions; and
- acquiring marketable skills as preparation for earning a living.

Desired Characteristics

Career Education should have the following characteristics.

1. It should consist of coordinated, sequential, and cumulative activities, K-12.

2. It should be multidisciplinary in nature; it should utilize as far as possible the existing educational disciplines with emphasis upon goals of students.

3. It should have meaning to the student, the school, and the entire community; the community should be interested, supportive, and involved.

4. It should ensure that students develop a positive attitude toward work and that they respect each person's work through understanding of the interrelatedness and interdependence of all careers.

5. It should provide an awareness of and an adaptability for differences in demands in the labor market and the career world.

6. It should offer students alternate sequences through a flexible educational system that can adjust to the interests, aptitudes, abilities, aspirations, and unique characteristics of each individual.

7. It should contribute to students' knowledge of the fundamental concepts and processes of the American economic system and of opportunities for individual participation and success in the system.

8. It should ensure that all students are prepared to enter the world of work with marketable skills.

II. OBJECTIVES OF CAREER EDUCATION

The expected outcomes for Career Education are that every student develop competencies necessary for living and making a living and appropriate attitudes toward work and the worker. Students should become aware of a large number of occupations and careers, be involved in investigation of selected occupations and careers, use this information to make wise choices, and acquire competencies and/or academic background requisite to one or more of them.

Work toward the objectives, however, should not be rigidly held to the organizational levels suggested here. Rather, each objective should be developed whenever it is most appropriate. In addition, work toward some objectives suggested for elementary schools may be continued in middle school. In some cases such a continuation of concept development may be necessary since some concepts should not be taught until students have had sufficient experience and are sufficiently mature to understand them.

Awareness

The following general objectives are a suggested framework for local schools to use in providing Career Education in the elementary school. By the end of the elementary school years, students should:

- demonstrate wholesome attitudes toward the career choices of people; toward work, as a means of achieving many satisfactions; and toward work in relation to themselves;
- demonstrate an understanding of the life styles, values, major duties and responsibilities involved in a large number of careers;
- demonstrate their ability to apply basic economic concepts to problems which can be understood by children of their age and experience level;
- show interest in exploring many careers;
- know how to obtain additional information about careers.

Investigation

The following general objectives may provide the framework for local schools to use in developing opportunities for investigation in the middle school. At the end of their middle or junior high school experiences, students should:

- have in depth knowledge of several major career fields;
- have become aware of many additional career fields;
- have explored rather thoroughly their own values, interests, and educational achievements;
- have firsthand acquaintance with the economic system--as consumers and as observers of those who work to produce goods and perform services;
- be prepared to select a tentative high school educational plan best suited to their individual needs and desires.

Choice

As a basis for career preparation, each student should:

- be able to integrate his knowledge of himself and of the world of work in order to identify a career or careers for which he will prepare;
- recognize the changing nature of career commitment throughout an individual's lifetime and be able to reevaluate his career choices with the possibility of making further choices later.

Preparation

In addition to continuing the objectives of previous levels, students should be able to:

- become gainfully employed at an entry level appropriate to his career objectives upon leaving high school or
- enter a junior college, technical institute, preparatory school, apprenticeship program, or senior college for continued career preparation;
- or both.

Economic Education as a Part of Career Education

Meaningful economic education is a major component of Career Education and provides a major dimension to an understanding of the economic forces that affect individual career choices. Through enrichment of the existing curriculum, students can and will acquire basic economic concepts which are in keeping with the philosophy of Career Education. The interrelationships of economic and Career Education concepts cannot be fully developed or understood unless they are incorporated throughout the curriculum beginning with kindergarten and extending through grade

twelve.

Many courses lend themselves to the introduction of economic ideas. Elementary children, particularly in a social studies program, can grasp simple notions of division of labor, prices, role of markets, specialization, supply and demand, concepts which relate directly to career decisions. Many courses lend themselves to the introduction of economic ideas. Mathematics, to name one example, offers an opportunity to introduce the basic concepts of national income accounting.

Throughout the entire scope of a child's educational career, economic concepts can be developed to enrich and expand a school's Career Education program.

III. IMPLEMENTING CAREER EDUCATION

The first and most important task to be performed by a local district in instituting Career Education is the development of a management plan.

Management Plan

The management plan should serve as a basic document to guide development and implementation. It should:

- establish district-wide goals and objectives;
- set parameters and priorities;
- identify possible constraints and sources of support, including the community and regional education service centers;
- schedule tasks;
- commit district resources;
- establish a framework for evaluation.

Curriculum Development

The development of a plan for curriculum reform should be a major result of implementing the management plan. Since the curriculum for Career Education should be sequential, multi-disciplinary, and flexible, its development should be a unified, broadly based process. Some tasks are indicated:

- identifying concepts and organizational levels at which each concept should be stressed;
- analyzing the present curriculum and planning strategies for incorporating career concepts in this curriculum and/or
- redirecting or restructuring the present curriculum toward Career Education objectives;
- identifying appropriate teaching materials and developing materials as needed; and
- planning evaluation of the curriculum.

Each local school district will, no doubt, desire to choose its own organizing structure, its own concepts, and to determine the

sequence with which they will be developed into an instructional pattern. This pattern may call for additions, deletions, and changes in course offerings. Suggested materials may be found in the appendices of this bulletin. Appendix A contains the names of 15 career fields into which all careers may be grouped. Appendix B contains Career Education concepts developed in Career Education pilot projects which were funded through the Department of Occupational Education and Technology.

Orientation of Pupil Personnel Services

Career Education is not limited to instruction but reaches the pupil in as many ways as possible. The guidance program, K-12 should make its contribution; its services must be reexamined and reoriented so that career information, educational planning, and individual appraisal can be current, relevant, accurate, and productive of wise decisions. Counselors and others who have guidance responsibilities should be involved in this reexamination and reorientation process.

The student activity program of the school also contributes to the achievement of Career Education objectives. Periodic evaluation of its contribution is appropriate. Staff members responsible for student activities should be involved in planning and evaluation activities which seek to improve the Career Education potential of such activities. Students themselves should serve frequently in staff development, community involvement, and curriculum development.

Pupil personnel services include pupil accounting, attendance, scholastic records, and other information sources essential in Career Education. Teachers, counselors, and students should become aware of the potential of such information and be assisted in utilizing it. The administrative plan for Career Education and its implementation should include use of these information sources and the generation of periodic reports needed in upgrading Career Education. Dropout studies and follow-up studies of graduates can serve in evaluation of Career Education as it emerges.

Staff Development and Community Involvement

A plan for staff development should also be developed as a result of implementing the management plan. Since staff development (inservice education) in Career Education is likely to involve many teachers and to continue for some time, setting of priorities and commitment of time and resources is crucial to success. Since staff members involved in curriculum development will be knowledgeable, they may also serve in the inservice program.

Staff development in Career Education will be stronger if it involves the community. This involvement will also stimulate

interest and support of the community.

Parent-teacher organizations may be used to inform the community of what Career Education is and to solicit appropriate support for it. Local advisory committees may be useful, especially if they are broadly based, representative of the community at work. Staff development activities should draw on community expertise to broaden the vision of the classroom teacher of career options.

Evaluation

Determining the success of Career Education depends upon evaluating its processes and its effects on participants. Questions should be raised about the manner in which Career Education is implemented and operated; and information will be needed about the performance of participants. What changes in the behavior of participants are sought? What kinds of evidence are administrators willing to accept that the learner's behavior has changed? To what extent are stated objectives being met?

These and other questions should be raised so that kinds and types of information needed for evaluation can be identified. Sources of data should be identified and appropriate data gathering instruments, when needed, should be prepared. Plans for the analysis of collected data and for the utilization of findings to improve and to redirect programs are vital parts of the evaluation design.

Reporting evaluative findings to the various publics who need and who will use the information is another essential part of evaluation. It is critical for school boards, the general public, advisory committees, and others to be informed about the effectiveness of Career Education. It is also essential for each component of the elementary and secondary school system to report successes, shortcomings, and problems to other components of the system. For example, the evaluation of Career Education in middle and senior high schools should be useful in improving Career Education in elementary schools.

School district personnel who are to be responsible for evaluation should be identified. Such personnel should be involved early in Career Education planning and should be able to coordinate the efforts of both internal and external groups and individuals who assist in the evaluation process.

IV. CAREER EDUCATION IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

A program designed for elementary school should be developmental--based upon a series of concepts, graduated according to difficulty and upon the needs and abilities of the children. It should assist students to become alert to people who work and to become curious about careers and ready for the investigation of careers which is to occur during the middle school years. Awareness of the world of work is considered to be the overall goal of Career Education in the elementary school.

The awareness of several different aspects of Career Education listed earlier in objectives for the elementary school level should serve as a basis for the derivation by school personnel of many specific instructional objectives. These objectives should then be coordinated with other instructional objectives for lesson development. Teaching-learning activities should be planned so they will contribute to the development of basic concepts. In kindergarten concepts should be introduced at the level of understanding of the students. In subsequent grades the same concepts introduced in kindergarten should be developed in more detail and additional concepts added. This will produce a spiraling effect so that important basic concepts are soundly developed as the child progresses.

Career Educatinn is not intended to be an added subject. Instead, it is intended to be incorporated into the curriculum. Careful planning by school staff will be necessary to develop a curriculum which will be truly sequential in nature, yet not needlessly repetitious.

Meaningful activities can become the vehicles to introduce and begin developing basic concepts. For example, a concept can be introduced through taking a field trip to the bakery or the supermarket. The field trip will contribute to the pupils' awareness of the interrelatedness of work and the interdependence of workers. The field trip will also provide a basis for classroom activities that are related to subject areas. In language arts students may dramatize interdependence using puppets depicting several types of workers. They may read in the library or their social studies textbooks to see if other people they do not yet know work together to produce goods and to provide services. They may demonstrate their own interdependence in classroom learning.

To develop the concept that any productive worker should be respected, learning experiences in the classroom may use discussion, talks with guests, dramatizations, role play, songs, or rhythms. The teacher and students may explore through talks with guests the importance of productive work and what makes such work productive. They may play charades, enacting productive and nonproductive

workers. Songs and dramatizations could depict ways we show respect to workers.

Methods and procedures used in developing each concept should reflect the teacher's understanding of early childhood growth and development. Instead of proceeding on a "catch-as-catch-can" basis, the teacher should build logically from simple lessons to in depth examinations of various career options. The importance of actual experiencing should not be overlooked. Every effort should be made to provide opportunities for children to work as workers do, with actual tools and equipment, using basic skills of computation, language, and reading, to know workers whom they would not otherwise know, to expand their world. They should understand more about the work done by members of their families as well as others. They need to be with or observe the worker for long enough to get beyond surface information to an understanding of life styles and values surrounding particular careers.

In addition, the regular instructional objectives should be carried out in such a way as to encourage the development of clear perceptions of the real world of work and how to be a part of it. Practical application of concepts should be stressed.

Although every elementary school does not have a counselor, it is the responsibility of every elementary school to provide an organized guidance program which contributes to the awareness objectives of Career Education. Those staff members who provide guidance services should assist instructional staff in gathering and disseminating accurate, up-to-date information about careers, in locating community resources useful in instruction, in making the community as a whole aware of the objectives and activities in Career Education undertaken in the elementary school.

If there are elementary counselors, they should serve in both formal and informal ways to assist teachers and pupils in broadening their visions about careers, and more importantly, in developing positive attitudes toward self, others, and careers.

V. CAREER EDUCATION IN THE MIDDLE SCHOOL

The middle school years are years of turmoil for preadolescents and adolescents. Students face inner and outer conflicts involving emotional, biological, sociological, and psychological developments. Questions arise such as, "Who am I?" "Where do I fit in my environment?" and "Where am I going?" Students begin to face the many conflicting choices of directions they will take in society. Students thus begin to consider career choices at a vital, but confusing, time of their lives. Middle schools, therefore, have both the responsibility and the opportunity to develop Career Education so that students can make better decisions concerning themselves and careers.

Investigation is the primary goal for Career Education in the middle schools. A middle school should provide all students with appropriate opportunities to observe and study in a systematic manner a variety of careers. These investigations by students should build upon the awareness of the world of work that is begun and sequentially developed in the kindergarten and elementary grades. The investigation should also serve as a bridge to the high school years of preparation for employment.

The special thrust of the middle school is threefold:

- opportunities in the subject areas to investigate many of the major careers associated with each of these areas;
- activities outside of organized instruction which can serve as investigative opportunities concerning careers--clubs, hobbies, sports, part-time jobs, school projects, and others; and
- counseling, testing, and educational planning, in terms of self concept, self awareness, and career choice.

By the time students enter middle school, they should be aware of the many concepts dealing with careers and career preparation. They should by this time be particularly aware of the interdependence of careers. As students enter a departmentalized curriculum structure, a new interdependence is to be developed, that which exists between subject area and careers. Each subject area can be a vehicle for investigative activities for various careers. A student may like a subject area and be interested in careers related to it. Conversely, a student may be interested in a specific career field and want to know how a specific subject area is related to it.

A teacher can build on a student's interest in history, for example, by encouraging the student to investigate a number of careers related to history. The teacher may guide the reading of the

student toward biographies of outstanding historians. Students may do library study of the many types of careers related to social science--teaching, writing, research, law, and others.

The student may interview individuals who work in social science careers in order to explore in depth such ideas as education needed, working conditions, financial status, related careers, and job opportunities. He may also explore the person's life style and value system. Such activities are applicable to any subject in the middle school.

Some careers relate more closely to one subject area than to others. For example, the sciences are most appropriate as the setting for investigating marine science occupations, health occupations, agri-business and natural resource occupations. Science laboratory activities include problem solving processes which are applicable to many careers. Planned field trips related to science careers provide further investigative opportunities.

As a further example, the activities given below for mathematics can be carried out also in other subject areas and courses. For each grade, visitors representing specific career fields can explore the relationship of mathematics to that field. By the end of middle school, students should have explored how mathematics relates to all fields. Another approach is for students to investigate the relationship between a specific mathematics concept--such as measurement--and each of the fields. A student may do individual research by selecting a career field and determining how each career involves the mathematics under study. Mathematics teachers can collect a variety of printed and non-printed resources for students to use as interest arises.

An alternative strategy of investigation is to develop study units about career fields which can be integrated into specific courses. For example, a unit on construction careers might become a part of the drafting component of industrial arts that is included in the middle school curriculum. Such a unit would outline the relationship of drafting to this particular career field and would describe the various occupations included therein. Students could then answer questions related to these occupations such as, "What is the employment outlook?" "Do I like to work where performance expectations are carefully laid out?" and "Do I find it easy to work with my hands or with machinery and tools?" Additional activities might call for (1) a visit to a construction job to observe the work environment, (2) preparation of reports related to occupations in the field of construction, and (3) interviews with architects, carpenters, machine operators, and others.

The same pattern of activities could be followed in investigating careers in farming, ranching, and other employment related to agriculture. The only differences would be changes in emphasis in questions asked, people interviewed, jobs observed, and information collected. Here the questions might be, "How well do I meet the physical requirements of outdoor work?" or "Do I like to work with soils, plants, animals, tools, and machines?" The

person interviewed could be a county agent, farmer, florist, veterinarian or other individual in a related occupation.

An additional strategy that schools may use to create investigative opportunities involves extracurricular activities. Such activities have a pronounced advantage over other activities because voluntary participation reflects the interests of students. Most schools have a variety of school clubs, many of which are related to subjects such as science, drama, history, speech, and vocational areas. Organization sponsors should develop programs that link career investigation to the objectives of a club.

In many middle schools, students participate in the production of school yearbooks and newspapers. Publications can help students investigate careers in a field such as journalism and can provide opportunities to experience, in a limited setting, the working conditions of related careers. For example, the student staff of a school newspaper can devote considerable study to the production of a newspaper, investigating careers ranging from typesetting to editorial work. A visit to a local newspaper office can be a part of the investigation.

Not to be overlooked is a school's organized athletic program. The obvious careers in coaching or professional sports more often overshadow the many related careers such as playground supervisor, recreation director, or physical therapist.

Throughout the development of Career Education in the various subject areas and other activities, strong emphasis should be given to the interdependence and interrelationship of all career areas. The truly educated person will have interest in, and respect for, all careers.

Although students may be investigating careers in subjects in which they are enrolled, such investigations can also provide insight into avocations or hobbies which are becoming more important as leisure time increases.

The guidance program of the middle school should contribute to the investigation objectives of the Career Education curriculum. The counselor should serve as a resource person for meeting specific needs and concerns of individuals or groups. He should coordinate information collection, activities, and procedures to facilitate the investigative processes in Career Education. He should assist in individual and group assessment and in educational planning. He should develop and sustain effective individual and group relationships through counseling. He should become a pivotal person in planning, organizing, and evaluating Career Education in the middle school.

VI. CAREER EDUCATION IN THE HIGH SCHOOL

A high school program of Career Education rests upon the cumulative experiences of the student developed during his elementary and middle school years in the same way that other high school programs such as science and mathematics depend upon foundations laid in the lower grades. The awareness and investigation objectives which received emphasis in the elementary and middle school program should continue to be implemented in the high school on a plane suited to the increasing maturation and understanding of the students. That is to say, the curriculum should include concepts that would not have been understood by younger children. Opportunities for investigating additional careers and familiar concepts in more depth should also be worked into the high school curriculum in much the same way they are included in the middle school curriculum.

In addition to the foregoing, high schools have particular objectives to be reached prior to the graduation of the student.

First, regardless of his ultimate career goals, each student should be equipped with a marketable skill that will enable him to enter the labor force should the need or desire arise for him to do so. Obviously, many students will prefer to have a well-developed marketable skill upon graduation so that they can immediately obtain good paying jobs and support themselves. These students will likely desire to commit relatively large amounts of time to such skill development. The school should, therefore, either in its own organization, through an area vocational school, through a community college, or through other means, provide a wide range of skill development programs.

Second, each student who desires to undertake advanced preparation, whether it be in a post-secondary technical school, college or university, or business school, should be equipped with the necessary prerequisites to undertake such additional training. Necessarily, such students will need to commit major amounts of time and energy to the development of these prerequisites. It is important to understand, however, that within the entire curriculum there are abundant opportunities to develop marketable skills. To maximize these opportunities will require a systematic reevaluation of the objectives and content of each course offered. Each course should be replanned to provide for the development of marketable skills. The core subjects such as English, mathematics, science, and social studies can be conducted in such a way as to prepare many students not only for further intellectual development but also for such jobs as tutors and teacher aides, as well as for employment in consumer services where one-to-one interpersonal relationships are important. Elective subjects such as homemaking, industrial arts, and distributive education are already designed to provide some employ-

ment preparation. Other elective subjects such as band, journalism, drama, and art can also prepare students to enter the labor market as copy boys, entertainers, music librarians, set builders, stagehands, and studio clerks. Courses not structured to include provision for marketable skill development should be reexamined and objectives planned to provide entry level skills.

Extracurricular activities such as clubs and athletics which can help meet investigation objectives in the middle school can help carry out preparation objectives in the high school. In the same way that the curriculum will need to be revised to carry out Career Education objectives, the organization of extracurricular activities should be carefully reexamined and redesigned to make sure that opportunities for skill development are provided.

Such reexamination and revision of the high school program should be undertaken in the perspective of the real world that awaits students upon their leaving the public schools. It is this recognition of realism that must permeate the entire curriculum if Career Education objectives are to be achieved.

Career preparation objectives should become a major focus of guidance activities in the high school. In fact, those performing such guidance functions as consultation, coordination, counseling, and educational needs assessment and planning should have key responsibilities in working with students, teachers, administrators, and parents in developing and interpreting the school's efforts in Career Education. The counselor, for example, should serve as liaison with institutions offering education beyond high school. He should counsel with individuals regarding prerequisites, test results, and other aspects of educational and career plans. His office should be a clearinghouse for career information and for employment contacts. His office should be the first stop for the student considering dropping out of school, or for the student needing to talk through personal concerns, or for the student seeking help in career decisions.

VII. CONCLUSION

For students to make meaningful career decisions, they will need information about the world of work, an understanding of themselves, and assistance from parents, teachers, administrators, and counselors. In addition to school personnel, persons in the community who are interested and have the necessary skills can be invaluable to students in their investigation of careers.

If parents, schools, and communities work together, students should be able to receive the necessary assistance as they need it for making realistic personal career choices.

APPENDIX A

Career Fields*

Business and Office Occupations

Marketing and Distribution Occupations

Communications and Media Occupations

Construction Occupations

Manufacturing Occupations

Transportation Occupations

Agri-business and Natural Resources Occupations

Marine Science Occupations

Environment Control Occupations

Public Services Occupations

Health Occupations

Hospitality and Recreation Occupations

Personal Services Occupations

Fine Arts and Humanities Occupations

Consumer and Homemaking-Related Occupations

*Source: U. S. Office of Education

APPENDIX B

Career Education Concepts*

1. All work is important.
2. People work for various rewards or satisfactions.
3. Some jobs produce goods; others provide services.
4. Any productive worker should be respected.
5. Many people work to make life better for all.
6. Specialization leads to interdependency.
7. Some jobs are needed everywhere while others may be determined by where one lives, by supply and demand, or by changing conditions.
8. Learning basic school skills--reading, writing, spelling, computation, communication--is necessary for almost all types of jobs.
9. Training is necessary for most jobs; a well-planned school program can provide effective training.
10. Gaining information about many people and many jobs is part of the development process of choosing a career.
11. Understanding oneself is important in developing school skills and choosing a career.
12. Getting along with people is an important part of job success.
13. Leisure time activities affect career choice.
14. Information about abilities, aptitudes and achievement, and acceptance of this information help individuals make more realistic career decisions.
15. Careers are grouped by fields.
16. Positions are related within career fields.
17. Exploratory work experience helps improve knowledge about careers.

18. Young women as well as young men should prepare for a career.

19. All school subjects have significance for career exploration.

20. Life is a process of change, growth, and development.

21. Career choice may determine whether one will be employed or unemployed.

22. Career choice influences almost every aspect of life.

*These concepts were taken from Career Education Pilot Projects conducted by the following school districts:

Georgetown Independent School District, Granbury Independent School District, Houston Independent School District, Lyford Independent School District, San Antonio Independent School District, Texas Department of Corrections at Huntsville, Texas